

Cook County/Grand Marais Economic Development Authority
Meeting Minutes
November 10, 2020

PRESENT: Howard Hedstrom, Heidi Doo-Kirk, Scott Harrison, Bev Green
Carol Mork joined the meeting at 4:30 and left at 5:15 PM.

ABSENT: Hal Greenwood, Anton Moody

ALSO PRESENT: Pat Campanaro, Jim Boyd, James Joerke, Sherri and Tyler Smith,
Eric Brisson, Heath Ekstrom, Kat Gritzmacher, Sara Taylor, Mary Somnis

Hedstrom called the meeting to order. There were no public comments. Upon a Motion by Doo-Kirk, second by Green and all ayes, the Agenda was approved. Motion carried. Upon a Motion by Green, second by Doo-Kirk and all ayes, the October 13, 2020 Minutes were approved. Motion carried.

North Superior Fishery, LLC

The EDA received an offer from North Superior Fishery LLC to purchase Lot 2, Block 4 at Cedar Grove for \$25,000 including closing costs. There has been more demand for storage space than in the 16 years of being in business. New residents need to store pontoon boats, etc. In the future, they would like to add a retail fish shop along the Gunflint Trail. Upon a Motion by Doo-Kirk, second by Green and all ayes, the board accepted the offer. Motion carried. Campanaro and Somnis will work with the buyers on a Development Agreement and schedule a Public Hearing.

Cook County Towing

The EDA received an offer from Cook County Towing to purchase Lot 2, Block 8 at Cedar Grove for \$25,000 including closing costs. There has been more demand for storage at this business as well. Vehicles are brought in that need to be viewed by insurance adjustors, moved into the garage for repairs, or delivered to salvage. They want to move the storage area to the back of the building and get in compliance with the Declaration of Covenants. Upon a Motion by Harrison, second by Hedstrom and all ayes, the board accepted the offer. Motion carried. Cook County Towing has requested a \$10,000 grant of Business Development funds from the EDA and will go to the Cook County Revolving Loan Fund for a loan of \$15,000. The purchase is contingent upon approval of this loan request.

Upon a Motion by Doo-Kirk, second by Mork and all ayes, the board approved a loan of \$10,000, that will be forgivable in five years, if the property is kept in good order and in compliance with the Declaration of Covenants. Motion carried. Campanaro and Somnis will work with the buyers on a Development Agreement and schedule a Public Hearing.

Update on Ordinances re: Cedar Grove

The addition of “services” as allowable uses has been approved by Grand Marais Planning Commission and City Council. Working with DEED on possibility of adding live/work use by amendment to the Greater MN Public Infrastructure Grant Agreement. The updated Purpose Statement is in review with the Grand Marais Planning Commission and City Council.

Legislative Priorities 2021

The board discussed the following: Grand Marais Fire Redevelopment project, Assisted Living, Housing, DEED grant language
Boyd said the Chamber will advocate to retain funding for Cook County Higher Ed. He also said Judy may be approaching retirement and a search could be possible.

IRRR Resolution for CCHS Grant

Upon a Motion by Doo-Kirk, second by Mork and all ayes, the board passed Resolution 2020-06, to apply for and accepts funds from the IRRR Community Infrastructure Grant Program. Motion carried. Use of these funds is site work at Cedar Grove for the Cook County Historical Society’s archival storage facility.

James Hammer Business Development Request

Hammer has requested \$5000 for training/certification to start up a chimney sweep business. Cost of equipment is estimated to be approximately \$3000. Upon a Motion by Mork, second by Harrison and all ayes, the board approved a grant of \$4000, to be released upon receiving receipts for at least \$8000 in business start-up expenses for training, certification, and equipment. Motion carried.

SNAL Marketing Report

Kat Gritzmacher, Sara Taylor, and Heath Ekstrom attended to present the end of season marketing report. Highlights here:

-Media budget was \$57,176 and provided 1,500,000 impressions June - October

- Website traffic was nearly double over last year
- Most traffic came from MN, IL and WI with no Canadians as border was closed
- Mobile devices were most used, will target them next year with format, etc.
- Facebook use was more than double of last year
- AdTaxi did not perform as well as in the past
- Some Explore MN Golf did well and will be recommended for next year
- Emails were regularly sent to out list of past guests
- Retargeting social media was successful
- The general campaign was targeted to demographics and geographic areas
- Videos were popular, more than still photos
- The look alike audience tactic did well
- Local travelers were targeted and responded
- More link clicks than 2019 with a shorter season and smaller budget
- Recommend more Instagram next year
- We will promote like and share at the clubhouse and on GPS units next year
- Suggest selfie spots on the course

Financials

Harrison presented monthly financial reports for Superior National and the EDA, and EDA bills to pay. Upon a Motion by Doo-Kirk, second by Harrison and all ayes, the board approved the bills to pay as submitted. Motion carried.

Harrison reported that Mike Davies will work FT until about June and then be available on a reduced basis for the rest of the season next year.

Upon a Motion by Harrison, second by Doo-Kirk and all ayes, the board agreed to consider making a payment on the loan to Cook County, depending on end-of-year cash on hand and cash flow projections for 2021. Motion carried.

Other

Somnis requested that the board members give some thought to priorities for the next executive director and board members.

The board discussed moving the funds from IRRR for the Taconite Area Business Relief Loan program to the Grand Marais State Bank. Somnis will work with Goettl on setting up a new account and getting this done.

Upon a Motion by Green second by Doo-Kirk and all ayes the meeting was adjourned. Motion carried.